

June onwards, use your Aqua Line smart cards to ply on NMRC buses

SEAMLESS TRAVEL NMRC plans a unified smart card-based multimodal transport ticketing system for residents

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NOIDA: Passengers on the Noida Metro Rail Corporation's (NMRC) Aqua Line will be able to use the 'One City, One Card' in Noida feeder buses from the second week of June, officials said. The card is an initiative aimed at simplifying commutes and increasing revenue for the Metro body in Noida and Greater Noida.

The NMRC has integrated the services and is presently conducting trials of the facility. The Metro rail corporation envisages a unified smart card-based multimodal transport ticketing system for Noida, aimed to facilitate a seamless commuting experience to commuters within the city.

Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath had inaugurated services on Aqua Line on January 25 and the smart cards were issued to commuters at the same time. However, these feeder buses have been plying in Noida and Greater Noida since December 14, 2016, and services hadn't been integrated.

Executive Director of the NMRC, PD Upadhyaya, said the NMRC has a fleet of 50 low-floor AC buses that ply on 11 routes in Noida, Greater Noida and Noida Extension. "These are low-floor GPS-enabled air-conditioned buses. They are also fully covered with two CCTV cameras and panic buttons. The NMRC is currently conducting system integration trials. Once the trials are over, we can start the service in

June," he said. These buses also provide accessibility to differently-abled people, as the bus can kneel by 80mm when required.

These buses start from Botanic Garden and cover different Metro stations across Noida, as well as some villages. They also cover areas like the Okhla Bird Sanctuary. Similarly, the buses also start from Noida Extension to Sector 51 Metro Station, and cover Gaur City, Kisan Chowk, Garhi Chaukhandi village, and others on the way. These buses also ply between Noida and Greater Noida, covering Sector Alpha 1, Pari Chowk, Knowledge Park, NSEZ, etc. NMRC buses record an average of 10,000 commuters and generate ₹3.50 lakh revenue a day — not enough for the corporation to even recover its operational costs.

The NMRC's monthly revenue from bus services is ₹1 crore, against ₹3 crore of operational expenses a month. The bus services are available from 7am to 9pm at a frequency of 30 minutes. The NMRC also changed its bus routes recently to attract more commuters.

NMRC has also issued 24/7 helpline numbers — 18001800555 and a WhatsApp number — 9868394969 — to report matters or inquire in the lost-and-found. "Since these buses are equipped with CCTV cameras. The helpline numbers are given on tickets and also displayed on buses. Once people register a missing complaint, we match valuables and return," a NMRC official said.